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2003/2004 Annual Report

Elections BC

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July 26, 2004

The Honourable Claude Richmond
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Province of British Columbia
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, British Columbia
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Honourable Speaker:

Pursuant to section 13(1)(a) of the *Election Act*, I have the honour to present the 2003/2004 Annual Report of the Chief Electoral Officer to the Legislative Assembly.

This Annual Report of the Chief Electoral Officer covers the period January 1, 2003 to March 31, 2004.

Sincerely,

Harry Neufeld
Chief Electoral Officer

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Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data
Elections British Columbia.
Annual report. — 1997
Annual.
Title from cover.
ISBN 1480-3100 = Annual report -
Elections British Columbia
1. Elections British Columbia - Periodicals.
2. Elections - British
Columbia - Periodicals. I. Title. II. Title:
Elections BC ... annual report.
JL438.E43 353.4'8 C97-960306-4

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Message from the Chief Electoral Officer

The *Election Act* requires the presentation of an annual report to the Legislative Assembly regarding the work achieved under the Chief Electoral Officer's direction in the previous year. From the time such statutory reporting requirements were introduced, reports on the work of Elections BC have always been on a calendar year basis.

This report marks the first instance in which Elections BC's annual report corresponds to the prior fiscal year, rather than calendar year. However, because of the shift in defining what time period the 'year' refers to, this report includes a three month period prior to the start of last fiscal. That 'extra' period is from January 1 to March 31, 2003.

As well, this annual report marks the first time that Elections BC is providing a formal linkage to the contents of its three-year Service Plan, with a focus on the corresponding fiscal year's performance indicators.

These combined reporting changes follow the example of other Statutory Officers. I believe readers will find the changes to be positive, as they permit ready comparison of planned versus actual results for both financial and activity performance.

A defining element of our new working culture at Elections BC is that we strive to be "a planning and learning organization." Reporting on the results of our annual plans, and learning lessons from the gaps between those plans and what we deliver, helps us strengthen that culture.

Harry Neufeld
Chief Electoral Officer
July 2004

Year at-a-Glance Highlights

Elections BC is proud of the many accomplishments and milestones it has achieved in the past fifteen months. Some of the notable highlights are:

- In 2003/04 Elections BC successfully met its budget reduction of 25% from a baseline established in 2001.

- The *Election Act* was amended to remove the requirement to hold a province-wide enumeration, which was projected to cost $15.4 million if done door-to-door. A targeted voter registration campaign immediately preceding the May 2005 provincial general election will replace the traditional enumeration and election period registration activities, resulting in a cost savings of up to $9.7 million.

- On August 29, 2003, Chief Electoral Officer Harry Neufeld provided Jack Blaney, Chair of the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform, with a file of 15,800 names from the provincial voters list. The file contained the names of 100 men and 100 women randomly selected from each of the 79 electoral districts in the province, and formed the basis for selection of the 160 members of the Citizens' Assembly.

- In November 2003, Elections BC introduced an education kit entitled "Democracy in Action: Understanding and Exercising Your Electoral Rights" to all grade 11 classrooms in public and independent schools across British Columbia. The education kit was developed to educate youth on the electoral process and the importance of voting.

- To meet the challenge of a 35% budget reduction over the three year period ending in fiscal 2004/05, Elections BC's Management Team developed a new organizational structure that enables Elections BC to become a more effective and efficient organization. The new structure is designed to meet the operational needs of an event management organization, with a focus on planning and innovation.

- On November 17, 2003, the Chief Electoral Officer submitted a report to the Legislative Assembly on the recall process in British Columbia. The purpose of the report is to provide legislators with a review of the recall portion of the *Recall and Initiative Act* and to identify specific problems and provide recommendations that, if implemented, would address these issues effectively.

Role of the Chief Electoral Officer

Elections BC is a non-partisan Office of the Legislature responsible for the fair and impartial administration of the *Election Act*, *Recall and Initiative Act*, *Referendum Act*, and the *Constitutional Amendment Approval Act*. Elections BC is the usual name for the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer of British Columbia.

As a statutory Officer of the Legislature, the Chief Electoral Officer reports directly to the Legislative Assembly through the Speaker. As an independent Officer, the Chief Electoral Officer can make Orders and Regulations, and must exercise the responsibilities of the position in an impartial manner. The Chief Electoral Officer cannot be a member of a political party, make contributions to a political party or candidate, or vote in provincial elections. The term of office for the Chief Electoral Officer is from the date of appointment until 12 months after the second general election for which the Chief Electoral Officer is responsible. The Chief Electoral Officer may be reappointed to further terms of office.

The role of Elections BC is somewhat different from that of the other Offices of the Legislature. Whereas their roles are primarily as 'watchdogs', Elections BC has a large operational component to its mandate. Event administration, planning and logistics, policy and procedure development, training, data collection and information maintenance form the core of the office's work. Elections BC is responsible for ensuring that participants in the provincial political, electoral, recall and initiative processes comply with legislation.

The office administers the most comprehensive range of electoral legislation in Canada, with the *Recall and Initiative Act* being unique in the Commonwealth. In performing their duties, the staff of Elections BC are constantly aware of the need to ensure impartiality, accessibility and transparency. Public confidence in the administration of all aspects of the electoral process is essential to maintain a healthy democracy.

Vision, Mission, Mandate and Goals

Vision

To be leaders in electoral administration

Mission

To serve the people of British Columbia, by giving effect to their democratic rights, through fair and impartial administration of the electoral process

Mandate

To administer the provincial electoral process in British Columbia in accordance with the *Election Act*, *Recall and Initiative Act*, *Referendum Act*, and *Constitutional Amendment Approval Act*

Goals

Excellence in impartial electoral administration

Public awareness and understanding of the electoral process

Ensuring the electoral process is accessible and inclusive

Organizational Structure

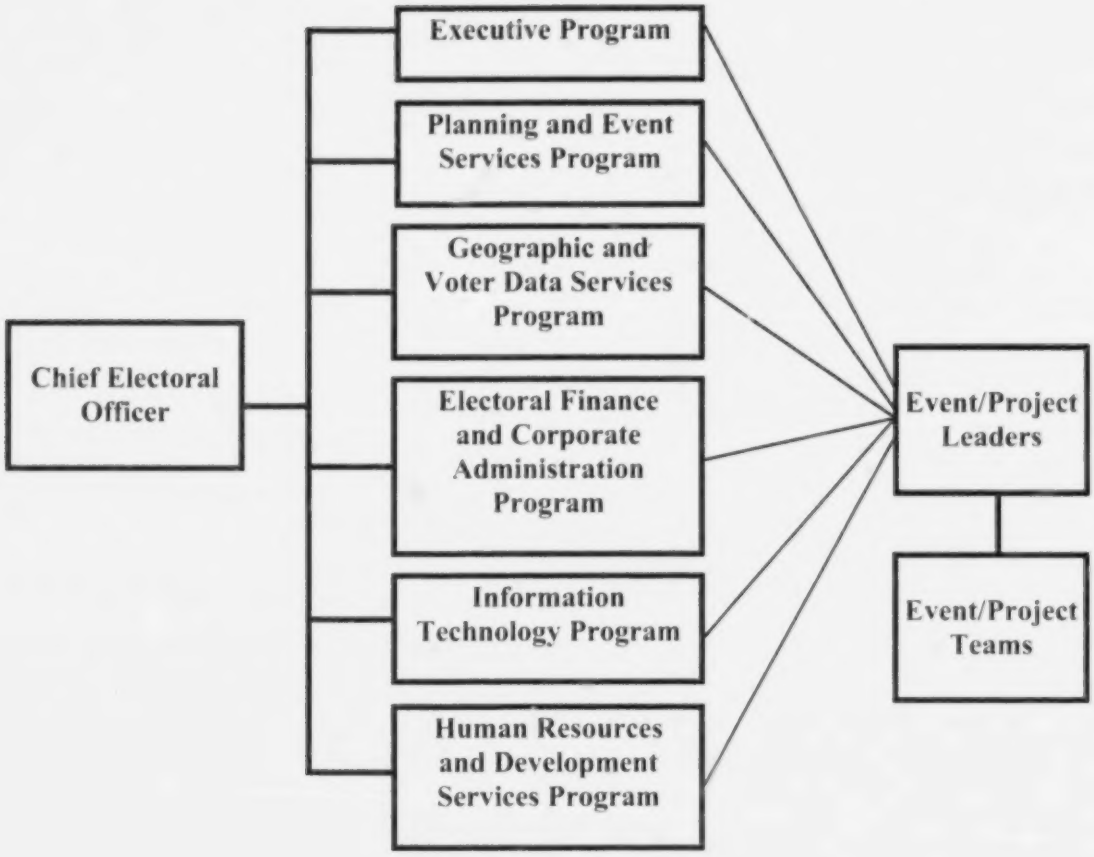
The organizational structure of Elections BC has changed significantly over the past year. Due to budget constraints, it became apparent that Elections BC would not be able to meet the on-going requirements set out in the *Election Act, Recall and Initiative Act,* and *Referendum Act* unless significant change was implemented. To meet this challenge, Elections BC's Management Team undertook a comprehensive review of the vision, goals, and core requirements of the organization.

There were two parts to this exercise. First was to identify strengths and weaknesses of the organization. Second was to identify critical factors that defined the future direction of Elections BC. This activity was a critical component to ensuring the changed organizational structure would be more focused while continuing to meet the legislative mandate.

In October 2003, the new organizational structure and transition plan was presented to Elections BC staff. Plans were implemented to have the new structure fully implemented by June 2004.

The new structure is designed to draw resources from each of the newly defined program areas in both administering electoral events and ongoing functions, thus encouraging cross-program area communication and sharing of expertise. The structure maximizes the use of skilled resources and makes planning central to the organization.

Elections BC's Organizational Structure



Core Program Areas

Executive

The Executive program area is responsible for legislation, Orders and Regulations, compliance, enforcement and investigations, interjurisdictional liaison, reporting to the Legislative Assembly, communications, public education and outreach, and organizational leadership.

Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration

The Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration program area is responsible for ensuring compliance with electoral finance legislation and maintaining the registers of political parties, constituency associations and advertising sponsors. The program area conducts compliance reviews of the financing reports of leadership contestants and recall and initiative participants, trains financial agents, performs audits of financial reports and conducts investigations.

The Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration program area is also responsible for corporate financial administration, including budgets and facilities management.

Planning and Event Services

Planning and Event Services is a new program area that was developed during Elections BC's organizational restructuring in 2003.

The Planning and Event Services program area is responsible for providing the leadership in implementing a planning framework for the efficient and effective execution of Elections BC's electoral events including general elections, by-elections, referenda, and recall and initiative petitions. This includes pre-event planning and organization of resources, event support and coordination of Event Leader activities, post event reporting, evaluation and assessment.

Planning and Event Services is also responsible for ensuring other program areas are provided with tools and support to enable the coordination and management of multiple events, special projects and ongoing activities in an efficient and timely manner.

Geographic and Voter Data Services

Geographic and Voter Data Services (GVDS) is another new program area that emerged from Election BC's organizational restructuring of 2003. GVDS has the primary responsibility for production of high quality electoral data and information. The program area is responsible for voter registration, voters list maintenance and the maintenance of a geo-spatial database containing B.C.'s electoral boundaries, road network and address data.

The GVDS program area provides a variety of services and products necessary for the administration of electoral events including the provincial voters list, the

address register, the Integrated Digital Electoral Atlas electoral maps, boundary set data extracts, street index references, location index guides, and printed or electronic voters lists.

Information Technology

The Information Technology program area provides reliable, innovative and cost effective information management systems, computer network access and technical support services for Elections BC staff. This program area is responsible for strategic corporate information technology planning, implementation and ongoing maintenance of all corporate information technology systems. Information Technology program personnel oversee systems development, systems operations, administration, security and maintenance undertaken by a competitively selected technology vendor. The Information Technology program area is also responsible for the planning and delivery of information technology services in support of Elections BC's requirement to maintain a constant state of readiness for both calendared and non-calendared events.

Human Resources and Development Services

The reorganization of Elections BC and changes to the human resources model across government created the need for Elections BC to place a greater focus on human resources. The Human Resources and Development Services program area provides strategic human resource planning and services for Elections BC's core group of thirty Public Service employees and 30,000 temporary staff and election officials during major electoral events.

The program area is responsible for leading the development of the terms and conditions of employment for temporary employees, development of recruitment models and establishment of both corporate and event training frameworks.

Overview of Activities

Recall

British Columbia is the only jurisdiction in the Commonwealth with recall legislation. The *Recall and Initiative Act* received Royal Assent in July 1994 and came into force in February 1995.

In 2003, Elections BC administered eight recall campaigns. Since the legislation came into force, Elections BC has administered a total of 20 recall petition processes.

In administering these recall petitions, Elections BC became aware of a number of problems with the recall process and legislation. In May 2003, Elections BC initiated a review of the current recall legislation. The review process included consultation with all proponents and MLAs involved in recall campaigns since the 2001 general election. On November 17, 2003, Chief Electoral Officer Harry Neufeld presented to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly a report on the recall process. The report identified specific problems with the legislation and provided recommendations that, if implemented, would address these issues effectively.

Following is a summary of the eight recall petitions administered in 2003.

Vancouver-Burrard

Petition number	RP-VBU-2003-008
Proponent's name	Alec Robert Zuke
Member's name	Lorne Mayencourt
Member's political affiliation	British Columbia Liberal Party
Issuance date	April 2, 2003
Return date	June 2, 2003
Registered Canvassers	76
Status of petition	Failed. The proponent did not return the petition signature sheets by the deadline and therefore the petition failed.

Vancouver-Point Grey

Petition number	RP-VPG-2003-007
Proponent's name	Eric Simons
Member's name	Gordon Campbell
Member's political affiliation	British Columbia Liberal Party
Issuance date	March 13, 2003
Return date	May 12, 2003
Registered Canvassers	154
Status of petition	Failed. The proponent withdrew on Monday, May 12, 2003. As the petition signature sheets were not returned by the deadline the petition failed.

Recall petitions administered in 2003 (continued)

Victoria-Beacon Hill

Petition number	RP-VTB-2003-006
Proponent's name	Sybil Rowe
Member's name	Jeff Bray
Member's political affiliation	British Columbia Liberal Party
Issuance date	February 28, 2003
Return date	April 29, 2003
Registered Canvassers	147
Status of petition	Failed. The proponent did not return the petition signature sheets by the deadline and therefore the petition failed.

Nelson-Creston

Petition number	RP-NEL-2003-005
Proponent's name	Birthe Wilson-Achtner
Member's name	Blair Suffredine
Member's political affiliation	British Columbia Liberal Party
Issuance date	February 27, 2003
Return date	April 28, 2003
Registered Canvassers	394
Status of petition	Failed. The proponent did not return the petition signature sheets by the deadline and therefore the petition failed.

Columbia River-Revelstoke

Petition number	RP-CLR-2003-004
Proponent's name	Joylaine Orr
Member's name	Wendy McMahon
Member's political affiliation	British Columbia Liberal Party
Issuance date	February 26, 2003
Return date	April 28, 2003
Registered Canvassers	193
Status of petition	Failed. The proponent did not return the petition signature sheets by the deadline and therefore the petition failed.

Recall petitions administered in 2003 (continued)

Nanaimo-Parksville

Petition number	RP-NAP-2003-003
Proponent's name	Elizabeth Fox
Member's name	Judith Reid
Member's political affiliation	British Columbia Liberal Party
Issuance date	February 20, 2003
Return date	April 22, 2003
Registered Canvassers	177
Status of petition	Failed. The proponent did not return the petition signature sheets by the deadline and therefore the petition failed.

Nanaimo

Petition number	RP-NAN-2003-002
Proponent's name	George Charles Addison
Member's name	Mike Hunter
Member's political affiliation	British Columbia Liberal Party
Issuance date	February 21, 2003
Return date	April 22, 2003
Registered Canvassers	186
Status of petition	Failed. The proponent did not return the petition signature sheets by the deadline and therefore the petition failed.

Alberni-Qualicum

Petition number	RP-ALQ-2003-001
Proponent's name	John Olsen
Member's name	Gillian Trumper
Member's political affiliation	British Columbia Liberal Party
Issuance date	February 24, 2003
Return date	April 25, 2003
Canvassers Registered	58
Status of petition	Failed. The proponent withdrew on March 5, 2003. As no signatures were collected, the petition did not meet the requirements of the *Recall and Initiative Act* and therefore failed.

Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform

The Citizens' Assembly was established by the Government of British Columbia in April 2003 to examine the province's electoral system. The Citizens' Assembly members were randomly selected from the provincial voters list.

During the week of July 28, 2003, Government sent an information brochure regarding the Citizens' Assembly mandate and information on voter registration to every residential household in the province. On that date, Elections BC opened a call centre to assist voters with registration and updates to their voter registration records, and to provide general information on the Citizens' Assembly. The call centre was open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday to Friday, and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., until August 22, 2003. Elections BC conducted this special registration drive to ensure all voters had the opportunity to be eligible for selection to the Citizens' Assembly.

On August 29, 2003, Chief Electoral Officer Harry Neufeld provided Jack Blaney, Chair of the Citizens' Assembly, with a file containing the names and contact information for 15,800 voters selected at random from the provincial voters list. One-hundred females and 100 males were selected from each electoral district. By selecting names on the basis of electoral district, geographic distribution was assured. The 100 names for each gender were stratified by five age groups; 18-24, 25-39, 40-55, 56-70, and 71 years of age and older. The statistical distribution of these five age groups was based on the 2001 Canadian census data for each electoral district.

Elections BC has maintained an on-going liaison with the Citizens' Assembly for the purpose of giving advice on the administrative and cost implications connected with any alternate electoral system being considered.

If the Citizens' Assembly recommends a new electoral system in its report scheduled for release on December 15, 2004, Elections BC will prepare for a province-wide referendum that will be held in conjunction with the May 17, 2005 provincial general election.

Voters List Quality Audit

In May 2003, Elections BC and Elections Canada undertook a scientifically based audit to measure the quality of the B.C. provincial and federal voters lists in terms of coverage and currency. Coverage is defined as the number of voters registered in relation to the total number eligible. Currency is defined as the number of voters who are listed at the address where they currently reside.

In early December 2003, Elections BC released a report on the results of the audit. The results indicated that, as of March 31, 2003, only 71% of eligible voters were registered provincially, with 74% of those registered listed at their current address. The audit projected that merging the Elections BC and Elections Canada's voters list for the province into a combined list would increase coverage to 95% and currency to 77%. The process of creating a synchronized list would add over 700,000 new voters to the provincial voters list.

However, legislative changes are required before Elections BC can gain access to Elections Canada's data. Currently, the *Election Act* does not provide Elections BC with the necessary flexibility to use the federal voters list. Legislative amendments are scheduled for the Spring 2004 legislative session and will enable Elections BC to use the National Register of Electors as a source of new voters and updates to the existing voter registrations.

Adopting a synchronized list will create significant savings in voter registration costs related to electoral events and eliminate duplication of effort between the federal and provincial jurisdictions.

Targeted Voter Registration

In December 2003, the *Election Act* was amended to remove the requirement to hold a province-wide calendared enumeration. With a fixed election date it is not efficient or effective to hold a province-wide enumeration one year before General Voting Day. In addition, as on average at least 16% of the B.C. population moves each year, the currency of the voters list would substantially decrease.

Elections BC will conduct a targeted voter registration campaign immediately preceding the May 2005 provincial general election. It is anticipated that the targeted enumeration will cost $5.7 million less than a province-wide enumeration conducted door-to-door. If recommended legislative changes are adopted to allow use of federal voter registration files, the savings could increase to $9.7 million. Planning is currently underway to identify the best enumeration techniques that will most effectively improve both coverage and currency of the provincial voters list in time for the May 2005 provincial general election.

Performance Reporting

In 2002, Elections BC was faced with a three year budget reduction of 35% from an annual appropriation baseline established from fiscal year 2001/02. To ensure Elections BC continued to meet its legislative mandate, Elections BC's Management Team was required to review the vision, goals, and core requirements of Elections BC as an organization. During this review, core requirements were identified – namely legislative requirements outlined in the *Election Act, Recall and Initiative Act,* and *Referendum Act.*

The review resulted in a shift in priorities, requiring downsizing and restructuring. Elections BC is now focused on building a planning and learning culture that ensures efficient, effective and impartial administration of the electoral process in B.C.

Elections BC has had to shift its organizational direction from what was established at the time the 2003/04-2005/06 Service Plan was prepared. The 2004/05-2006/07 Service Plan, submitted April 26, 2004 to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, substantially modifies the previous plan's objectives and strategies. However, the results presented in this Annual Report relate back to the organization's previously planned activities as outlined in the 2003/04-2005/06 Service Plan.

It is important to note that the core business areas outlined in the 2003/04-2005/06 Service Plan are not listed as they have been significantly modified as a result of Elections BC's restructuring.

With Elections BC's new organizational structure and focus, the organization will ensure it performs effectively to meet its newly defined goals and objectives during the 2004/05 fiscal year. Elections BC staff will continue to work towards their vision of being leaders in electoral administration.

Goal 1: Innovation in efficient, effective and impartial administration of electoral and initiative legislation

	Objective	Strategy	Performance Measure	Results
1.1	Compliance with filing requirements for political entities.	Provide training sessions and detailed guides for financial agents to facilitate compliance.	Web-based training updated as required; guides updated annually.	Achieved. Current web-based training for financial agents of political parties and constituency associations is available on Elections BC's Web site. Guides were reviewed, updated and reprinted as needed.
1.2	Compliance with legislated audit and investigation requirements.	Perform risk-based audits on political entities; conduct investigations upon complaints/evidence of contraventions.	At least one political party or constituency association audited each year; complaints handled promptly and investigated as appropriate.	Achieved. One political party, one constituency association and five candidates were audited in 2003/04.
1.3	Corporate knowledge and expertise in event administration, relevant legislation, international trends and voting technology.	Attend workshops and conferences; study and adopt best practices; maintain information sharing network with other electoral jurisdictions.	Staff are knowledgeable and have access to current information; able to respond quickly to issues and develop innovative solutions.	Achieved. All Elections BC employees participated in bi-weekly internal workshops. An inter-jurisdictional study session was conducted to examine best practices in voter registration and list maintenance.
1.4	Cost-effective event administration.	Analyze cost drivers in event administration and identify and implement cost reduction strategies that do not impede client access to the electoral process.	Expenditure guidelines established and monitored for District Electoral Officers (DEOs)/District Registrars of Voters (DRVs). Programs area meet event budget targets.	Achieved. Program area Directors and Managers were responsible for developing detailed cost models for their program area.
1.5	Voting area boundaries are maintained.	Review voting area populations; redistribute as required.	90% of voting areas below 400 voters by March 31, 2004.	Achieved. As of March 31, 2004, 96.8% of the voting areas have less than 400 registered voters. Voting area redistribution is currently underway to pre-emptively address areas of high growth and better prepare for the 2005 provincial general election.
1.6	Appropriate map products are available.	Consult with DEOs, DRVs and other clients to identify their requirements.	Consultations completed by Sept. 30, 2003. Products developed and produced as required.	Achieved.
1.7	Nomination process is administered efficiently and effectively.	Nomination materials available on-line; process fully documented; staff and DEOs well-trained.	Standing nominations processed within 24 hours of receipt; certificates of candidacy issued in a timely way; issues resolved promptly.	Achieved. Nomination materials are available on Elections BC's Web site. No standing nominations received. Nomination process is fully documented and staff are trained. DEOs to be trained in Fall 2004.
1.8	Political entities and advertising sponsors are registered and data updated efficiently.	Registration information available on-line; forms streamlined to facilitate updating.	Applications for registration processed within one week of receipt.	Achieved. Nine new political parties and ten new constituency associations were registered in 2003/04. All registrations were completed in a timely basis.

Goal 2: An appropriate state of readiness for electoral and initiative events

	Objective	Strategy	Performance Measure	Results
2.1	All necessary officials are appointed.	Recruit District Electoral Officers (DEOs) and Deputies as vacancies occur.	Vacancies filled within 60 days of occurring.	Decision was made that bulk recruitment would be more efficient. Currently, there are 25 vacancies which will be filled by August 31, 2004 in time for training sessions to be held in Fall 2004.
2.2	All DEOs, Deputy DEOs, District Registrars of Voters (DRVs) and Deputy DRVs are trained.	Provide training and manuals to all DEOs, DDEOs, DRVs and DDRVs.	All appointees have a current manual and their knowledge is tested periodically. DEOs and DDEOs receive two days of training per year. DRVs/DDRVs receive two days of training in 2004/05.	All DEOs and Deputies participated in a one-day information session in February 2004. New appointees received an additional day of training. All appointees will receive an updated manual and additional training in Fall 2004.
2.3	Provide consistent training of election officials.	Develop election official workbook for use by DEOs.	Workbook finalized and printed by March 31, 2004.	Due to organizational changes, a training framework workbook will not be developed in 2003/2004. A new training framework will be used in preparation for the 2005 election.
2.4	All voting/event documents and materiel are current.	Review documents and materiel and associated distribution formulas; revise as required.	Voting/event documents and materiel reviewed annually for currency.	A project is underway to review voting and event documents, update as required to reflect changes to legislation and create new documents by Fall 2004.
2.5	Sufficient materiel is on hand.	Review inventory and order materiel as required.	Sufficient stock on hand at all times for two by-elections, two recall petitions and two initiative petitions; general election materiel on hand by December 31/04.	Achieved. Elections BC's warehouse is sufficiently stocked to hold two by-elections and two recall petitions. May 2005 provincial general election supplies will be in warehouse by December 31, 2004.
2.6	Equipment plans are in place to support DEO/DRV field operations.	Establish requirements for DEO office equipment and DEO/DRV telephones.	Consultations with DRVs and DEOs completed by March 31, 2004; contracts in place by December 31, 2004.	Achieved. District electoral office requirements have been planned as has the procurement process to secure the equipment, its delivery, set-up, and removal. Contracts will be in place by December 31, 2004. Consultations occurred in February 2004 as part of the DEO training sessions.
2.7	Political parties, constituency associations and other participants are aware of event-period reporting requirements.	Maintain guides and reporting materials for use by financial agents.	Guides and reporting materials on Web site and in hard copy are reviewed for currency every six months.	Achieved.

Goal 2: An appropriate state of readiness for electoral and initiative events (continued)

	Objective	Strategy	Performance Measure	Results
2.8	Financial and administrative infrastructure is in place to support local and field operations.	Establish and document financial and administrative processes for electoral events.	Processes and procedures reviewed annually for currency.	Achieved. Financial and administrative procedures for electoral events were documented and continue to be reviewed and updated.
2.9	Address register is current, complete and accurate.	Establish, document and maintain update mechanisms with data providers. Ensure address resolution mechanisms are maintained.	Update mechanisms reviewed annually. Address register maintained at 99% resolved.	To ensure address register is current, complete and accurate, update mechanisms were reviewed on an ongoing basis through continuous monitoring of processed data quality. Address resolution tasks are being maintained.
2.10	Addresses not linked to registered voters are available for enumerations and other voter registration activities.	Identify 'empty' addresses through internal and external data matching.	'Empty' address file available as required.	Achieved. Empty address data will be incorporated into the January 2005 targeted enumeration plan.
2.11	Road network, administrative boundaries, address and background data is maintained at event-ready level.	Exchange address data with Elections Canada. Conduct periodic reviews of currency and completeness. Ensure database infrastructure is maintained. Enter into government based Digital Road Atlas project.	Review and update of existing Memorandum of Understanding with Elections Canada and setup of exchange network complete by September 30, 2003. Data exchanged and data quality sampled quarterly. Maintenance agreements established with contractors and government organizations.	Achieved. Currently, 97% of addresses are cross-linked with Elections Canada. Signed agreement in place for provincial government Digital Road Atlas data sharing initiative.
2.12	Communications strategies are event-ready.	Have agency of record in place; develop communications strategy.	Agency of record in place at all times; strategies in place six months prior to anticipated events.	Achieved. Currently developing communications strategies for the 2005 targeted enumeration and provincial general election.
2.13	Signature database is current.	Scan and adjudicate all new signatures into data base on a regular basis.	Signature data base current to last quarter.	The signature data base will no longer be maintained due to legislative changes to the *Election Act*.
2.14	If an enumeration is required in 2004, all necessary plans are in place.	Develop a comprehensive enumeration event.	Enumeration planning complete by December 31, 2003; event materiel and communications ready by March 31, 2004.	Legislative amendment was passed December 2003, canceling requirement to hold a province-wide enumeration. Targeted enumeration will be conducted preceding the 2005 May provincial general election.

Goal 3: All qualified voters have the opportunity to vote

	Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Results
3.1	Voting opportunities are accessible to voters who are mobility impaired.	Consult with District Electoral Officers (DEOs) and District Registrars of Voters (DRVs) to identify new, or changes to existing, special voting areas.	Consultations and review done annually.	DEOs were issued a work package to update special voting area information in March 2004.
3.2	Voting places are accessible and secure.	Audit voting places to identify accessibility and security issues and select alternate locations where necessary. Communicate with school boards to ensure availability of facilities while addressing student safety concerns regarding voting in schools.	100% of advance voting locations are wheelchair accessible; 90% of general voting locations are wheelchair accessible. Adequate safeguards are in place to protect students in schools used as voting places.	Scheduled for Fall 2004.
3.3	Military personnel deployed outside the province have the opportunity to vote.	Liaise with the Department of National Defence to identify strategies for voting administration.	Voting materials are successfully delivered to, and returned by, out-of-province military personnel.	Scheduled for January 2005.
3.4	Voters in remote communities have access to voting opportunities.	Identify remote communities where voters reside and identify appropriate voting opportunities for those communities.	Appropriate voting opportunities identified for each community by March 31, 2004.	Scheduled for completion Fall 2004.
3.5	The public has access to information regarding voting opportunities.	Provide toll-free service and a Web site containing relevant information.	Toll-free service available for extended hours during electoral events; voting information and opportunities are accurately listed on Web site.	No elections have taken place. During an electoral event, toll-free information lines are open extended hours.
3.6	All voters are advised of the general voting location for their place of residence.	Geo-reference all residential address to electoral districts and voting areas. Mail 'Where to Vote' information cards to registered voters and to all other residential addresses where no voters are currently registered during a voting event.	Potential voting places are identified for all voting areas by December 31, 2004. 'Where to Vote' information cards are delivered to all appropriate addresses prior to General Voting Day for a voting event.	Scheduled for completion Spring 2005.

Goal 4: Public awareness of the electoral process

	Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Results
4.1	Future voters are aware of their democratic rights.	Develop material for use by schools to communicate voting rights to youth 18 years of age or younger.	Materials developed and tested by September 30, 2003. Kits distributed to all schools for Grade 11 and 12 students by September 30, 2004.	Achieved. School kits were sent to all grade five and 11 classrooms across British Columbia to assist teachers in teaching future voters about their democratic rights and the electoral process.
4.2	Information regarding the electoral process is accessible to the public, news media, political parties and other stakeholder and special interest groups.	Maintain a comprehensive and current Web site; maintain informational material for the public; enquiry clerks and toll-free information operators are hired and trained to provide public information.	Web content is reviewed and updated as required; publications and forms are reviewed and updated as required; Annual Reports and event-specific reports are produced in a timely way.	Achieved. Information on Elections BC's Web site is current within two working days. Publications, forms and guides are updated when necessary.
4.3	Ethnic groups are aware of the electoral process.	Identify stakeholder groups and establish partnerships to facilitate communications.	Aboriginal, Chinese-Canadian and Indo-Canadian liaisons are established by September 30, 2003.	Public information materials and voter registration applications were sent to all Secondary Schools, Band Offices, Tribal Councils, and Friendship Centres. Liaison officers will be hired prior to electoral events to ensure accessibility and create awareness.
4.4	The media has access to complete and up-to-date information on current electoral issues.	Issue news releases and backgrounders.	News releases and backgrounders are issued in a timely way; news releases are posted on the Web site on the same day they are issued.	Achieved.

Goal 5: A current, complete and accurate voters list

	Objective	Strategy	Performance Measures	Results
5.1	Use external data sources to update the voters list.	Use ICBC and Vital Statistics Agency data to maintain the currency and accuracy of the list. Gain access to federal voter data by restricting permitted uses of the voters list.	Updates to the voters list using data from ICBC and the Vital Statistics Agency are performed quarterly. The match rate to ICBC files is at least 80%.	Achieved. ICBC and Vital Statistics updated monthly. Current project underway to incorporate National Register of Electors (federal voters list) data into Elections BC voters list and maintain ongoing exchange.
5.2	Provide low cost, continuous public access to voter registration or updating.	Use the government Multiple Address Change service to receive voter updates; voter record updating and requests for registration available on Elections BC Web site.	Voter record updates from Multiple Address Change are processed monthly; unregistered voters are sent application forms upon request. Web updates and requests processed daily.	Achieved. Voter record updates from Multiple Address Change were processed monthly. 'Application to Register as a Provincial Voter' forms were sent upon request. Web site enhanced to allow downloading of registration forms. All web updates and requests were processed daily. On-line voter registration will be implemented September 2004.
5.3	Voter data meets legislated requirements.	Identify voter records with missing data and follow-up with voters; ensure voters are linked to the correct residential address through external data matching.	98% of voter records are correct and 90% are correctly linked to residential addresses.	Planned for targeted enumeration in 2005.
5.4	The voters list accurately identifies voters' electoral districts and voting areas.	Residential addresses are geo-referenced to electoral districts and voting areas.	98% of residential addresses are correctly geo-coded.	Achieved. Over 98% of addresses in database are geo-coded to correct location, electoral district and voting area.
5.5	Cancellation of the 2004 province-wide enumeration, and avoidance of expenditure of up to $9.7 million.	Evaluate the voters list to identify areas of concern and achieve improvements to ensure sufficient currency, completeness and accuracy to permit the Chief Electoral Officer to recommend cancellation of the 2004 enumeration.	Voters list is sufficiently current, complete and accurate that province-wide enumeration is not required; $9.7 million expenditure is avoided.	Elections BC completed a Quality Audit Report to determine the coverage, currency and accuracy of the provincial voters list. Legislation was passed December 2003 to avoid conducting a costly province-wide enumeration more than a year prior to the next scheduled election. A targeted enumeration will be conducted preceding the May 2005 provincial general election.

Our Finances

The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services has responsibility for considering and making recommendations on the budget of Elections BC.

In November 2002, the Chief Electoral Officer and members of his senior staff met with the Committee and presented Elections BC's budget requirements for 2003/04 through 2005/06. In its report to the Legislative Assembly in December 2002, the Committee recommended that Elections BC's operating budget for 2003/04 be $7,509,000.

The need for additional funding to administer recall petitions was recognized early in the fiscal year and in June 2003 the Chief Electoral Officer met with the Committee and detailed the need for funding to cover expenses incurred in administering eight recall petitions. The Committee subsequently recommended a recall budget of $310,000. In fiscal 2003/2004, $250,522 in recall costs were actually incurred.

The Chief Electoral Officer, his Deputy and the Director, Electoral Finance, met with the Committee again in November 2003 and presented Elections BC's budget proposal for 2004/05 through 2006/07. The proposal recognized the need for fiscal prudence and was consistent with the recommendations the Committee had made in their report of December 2002.

In December 2003, Elections BC provided the Committee with preliminary cost estimates for 2004/05 expenses related to three electoral events, namely the targeted enumeration planned for 2004/05 and planning and preparing for the 2005 general election and the potential referendum on electoral reform. In its December 2003 report to the Legislative Assembly, the Committee recommended an operating budget of $6,508,000 and an additional $7,000,000 associated with the costs of the three electoral events during fiscal year 2004/05.

Resource Summary
for the Fiscal Year 2003/04

OPERATING BUDGET	2003/04 Budget $	2003/04 Actual $	Variance $	2004/05 Budget $
Funding				
Estimates	7,509,000	7,509,000	-	13,508,000
Other authorizations – statutory appropriation	259,110	259,110	-	-
Total Funding	**7,768,110**	**7,768,110**	**-**	**13,508,000**
Expenses				
Salaries of permanent and temporary employees	1,961,565	2,142,907	(181,342)	1,958,717
Employee benefits	722,309	508,461	213,848	464,506
	2,683,874	2,651,368	32,506	2,423,223
Travel	85,783	32,019	53,764	37,900
Centralized management support services	80,000	86,216	(6,216)	87,000
Professional services	1,039,535	437,144	602,391	105,934
Information systems	1,067,099	2,247,496	(1,180,397)	1,457,373
Office and business expenses	279,481	149,420	130,061	149,950
Statutory advertising and publications	18,000	25,808	(7,808)	17,000
Utilities, supplies operating equipment and vehicles	19,400	18,313	1,087	3,900
Amortization	1,777,828	1,746,769	31,059	1,865,692
Building occupancy	452,000	372,237	79,763	358,028
Other expenses	265,110	1,320	263,790	7,002,000
Total Expenses	**7,768,110**	**7,768,110**	**-**	**13,508,000**
Funding Returned	-	-	-	-

Note 1: Other expenses budget for 2003/04 includes statutory appropriation for recall petition expenses. Other expenses budget for 2004/05 includes $7,000,000 for conducting a targeted enumeration and planning and preparing for the 2005 general election and potential referendum on electoral reform.

Appendices

Appendix A - Political Party Registration Information

Political Parties that were Registered Between January 1, 2003 and March 31, 2004

2003

The Annexation Party of British Columbia
BC Allegiance Party
Bald Eagle Party
British Columbia Democratic Futures Party
Confederation Party of British Columbia
United Peoples Action Party
Work Less Party of British Columbia

2004

B.C. Democratic Alliance
British Columbia Labour Party

Political Party Name Changes Between January 1, 2003 and March 31, 2004

2003

British Columbia Grey Party to Citizens Action Party
Bald Eagle Party to Free Canadian Party
Democratic Idealists Party to Idealists Party

2004

Western Independence Party of British Columbia to Western Refederation Party of BC

Unity Party of British Columbia to British Columbia Unity Party

Political Parties that were Deregistered between January 1, 2003 and March 31, 2004

Failure to File 2002 Annual Financial Report

Accountability British Columbia Party
Coalition British Columbia
Council of British Columbians

Failure to File Supplemental 2001 Annual Financial Report

B.C. Action Party

Voluntarily Deregistered

Real Democracy Association of BC

Appendix B - Constituency Association Registration Information

Constituency Associations that were Registered Between January 1, 2003 and March 31, 2004

2003

Bulkley Valley-Stikine Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

Burnaby-Willingdon Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

Chilliwack-Kent Constituency Association The Moderate Democratic Movement

Chilliwack-Sumas Constituency Association The Moderate Democratic Movement

Kamloops-North Thompson Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

Okanagan-Vernon Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

Vancouver-Burrard Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

Vancouver-Point Grey Constituency Association Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

2004

Maple Ridge-Mission Constituency Association British Columbia Unity Party

Surrey-Whalley Constituency Association British Columbia Unity Party

No constituency associations deregistered between January 1, 2003 and March 31, 2004.

Appendix C - Orders of the Chief Electoral Officer

Section 280 of the *Election Act* establishes the authority of the Chief Electoral Officer to make specific or general orders. Between January 1, 2003 and March 31, 2004, two orders were made by the Chief Electoral Officer.

Order No.	Date	Order
ORD001-2003	March 31, 2003	Two registered constituency associations were granted extensions to the deadline for filing their annual financial report for the 2002 calendar year.
ORD001-2004	March 31, 2004	One registered constituency association was granted an extension to the deadline for filing its annual financial report for the 2003 calendar year.

Appendix D - Regulations of the Chief Electoral Officer

Section 283 of the *Election Act* establishes the authority of the Chief Electoral Officer to make regulations. During the period covered by this report, one regulation was made by the Chief Electoral Officer.

Regulation No.	Regulation
193/2003	Allowed the Chief Electoral Officer to use the provincial voters list to provide the Chair of the Citizens' Assembly with one or more selection lists in order to identify and contact potential members of the Citizens' Assembly.

Appendix E - Election Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

The composition and role of the Election Advisory Committee is established by sections 14, 15 and 16 of the *Election Act*. For more information on the Election Advisory Committee, including past meeting minutes, see Elections BC's Web site at http://www.elections.bc.ca./eac/eacmain.html.

Minutes of the Election Advisory Committee Meeting held May 1, 2003

Welcome and Introductions:
Harry Neufeld, Chief Electoral Officer, called the meeting to order and welcomed the Committee members. All attendees introduced themselves.

Administrative Matters:
Initially the meeting was being audio-taped to facilitate minute-taking. There was substantial consensus among the representatives that the taping should be discontinued. Taping ceased 14 minutes into the meeting.

Nola Western reviewed administrative matters in relation to the meeting facility and attendees' expenses.

Role and Expectations of the Committee:
Harry Neufeld distributed excerpts from the *Election Act* regarding the role and composition of the Election Advisory Committee. It was agreed that in future, attendance will be limited to the number of representatives each registered political party is allowed under the *Election Act*.

In certain circumstances, the Chief Electoral Officer will authorize the parties to have specialists attend. The specialists will be allowed in the Committee room only for the duration of their respective agenda items. As well, Elections BC may bring experts and other outsiders to address the Committee.

As far as possible, written documents will be provided in advance to Committee members so they can prepare for meetings. This will preclude the requirement for immediate feedback on items tabled at meetings, and provide an avenue for written responses from Committee members to Elections BC.

Meeting minutes will be much more generalized than in the past. On request, members' specific statements and positions will be noted in the minutes.

Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform:
Copies of the press release introducing the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform were distributed. The Committee discussed the use of the provincial list of voters as a means for selecting the Assembly. Because use of the provincial list of voters for this purpose requires a Regulation by the Chief Electoral Officer, the *Election Act* necessitates that the Chief Electoral Office consult with the Committee. The Committee discussed the completeness and accuracy of the voters list in the context of this proposed use. There were no objections to using the voters list to select members for the Citizens' Assembly.

Legislative Change - Recent and Pending:
Committee members were provided with the *Election Statutes Amendment Act – 2002*, which contains the most recent amendments to British Columbia's *Election Act*. Nola Western highlighted the major changes.

Linda Johnson discussed the Supreme Court of Canada decision regarding prisoners' voting rights. As a result of the decision, it is expected that British Columbia's *Election Act* will be amended to allow voting by individuals serving sentences in federal prisons. The Committee was advised that upon passage of such an amendment, it is the intent of the Chief Electoral Officer to publish a notice in the BC Gazette waiving the six-month implementation period. The *Election Act* requires consultation with the Election Advisory Committee prior to publication of such a notice.

The Committee also discussed the status of a Request for Legislation, which if passed, would no longer permit use of the provincial list of voters for jury selection or other non-electoral purposes. Such an amendment would allow Elections BC access to federal voter data.

Linda Johnson gave an update on the status of the amendments to the *Election Act* recommended by the Chief Electoral Officer in the Report on the 2001 General Election. These amendments were discussed at the most recent Committee meeting.

Committee members were asked to advise the Chief Electoral Officer in writing by the end of July 2003 of any further recommendations for amendments they would like to have considered.

The question arose of whether the Committee should be consulted on issues regarding the *Recall and Initiative Act*. It was agreed that Committee representatives are welcome to recommend amendments to the *Recall and Initiative Act* despite its being outside the Committee's mandate. Hector MacKay-Dunn recommended that consideration be given to amending the *Election Act* to include recall and initiative issues as part of the Committee's mandate. Concern was expressed that proponents of recalls and initiatives would not have a similar opportunity, and that perhaps the *Recall and Initiative Act* might warrant its own forum for discussion.

Anticipated Requirement for Enumeration:
Handouts showing voter participation in British Columbia and other Canadian jurisdictions were provided. Statistics show a broadening gap between numbers of eligible and registered voters. Harry Neufeld informed the Committee that he believes he cannot recommend cancellation of the enumeration legislated for May 2004, however, a traditional door-to-door enumeration is no longer efficient or cost-effective.

A discussion paper on voter registration was provided to the Committee members. Feedback on the most appropriate approach to effective enumeration was requested to be sent to the Chief Electoral Officer by the end of June 2003. The members were advised to note that the number of registered voters in British Columbia has decreased somewhat because of a purge process undertaken prior to the 2002 Treaty Negotiations Referendum.

Alternate methods of enumeration and voter registration were discussed, including enumerating by mail and on-line voter registration. The importance of voter signatures was underscored, as they are necessary for verifying recall and initiative petitions, and mail-in ballots like those used in the 2002 Treaty Negotiations Referendum. As well, Elections BC is reviewing recent studies by Elections Canada on increasing youth participation in the electoral process.

Next Meeting:
The next meeting will be called in approximately four months' time, before Elections BC meets with the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services in the early Fall.

Minutes of the Election Advisory Committee Meeting held September 4, 2003

Introductions and Administrative Matters:
Harry Neufeld, Chief Electoral Officer, called the meeting to order and welcomed the Committee members. All attendees introduced themselves. Administrative matters in relation to the meeting facility and attendees' expenses were reviewed.

Agenda Items:
Harry Neufeld provided an overview of the agenda content and general background of related activities since the Committee's May 2003 meeting.

In June 2003, Elections BC participated in a study with Elections Canada to measure the quality of the provincial and federal voters lists, focusing on coverage, currency and accuracy. Audit results indicated that 71% of eligible voters in British Columbia are registered and 74% of the registered voters are at their current address. The annual mobility rate in British Columbia ranges from 15% to 27% depending upon the geographical location and demographics of each electoral district. With only 53 out of every 100 voters registered at their current address, an enumeration, starting May 3, 2004, is required under current legislation. To achieve an improved level of list currency, it would be more beneficial to enumerate closer to the general election scheduled to occur on May 17, 2005.

Elections BC is constantly updating and adding voter records using sources such as drivers license and vital statistics files, phone input from voters via a 1-800 call centre and in-person submissions via Government Agent services. However, low levels of public participation in voter registration, high levels of population mobility and budget reductions affect the quality of the voters list. A better approach is required to keep it up-to-date for purposes such as administering the *Recall and Initiative Act*, conducting elections and by-elections, and providing political parties with current information. Combining the federal and provincial voters lists would provide the best coverage, and other provinces have already adopted this model. Harry Neufeld reported he was working with Jean-Pierre Kingsley, Chief Electoral Officer of Canada, to devise common strategies for sharing data and maintenance work, and that Elections Canada officials will be meeting at Elections BC during the week of September 8, 2003 to define the fundamental requirements of such arrangements.

In July 2003, an enumeration project team analyzed options and recommended a multi-channeled approach that would produce a higher quality voters list for the 2005 election, and would provide higher quality on-going voters list maintenance. However, the recommended alternative would require legislative change. Chief Electoral Officer Harry Neufeld briefed the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services on the recommended plan and the project expenditures associated with various enumeration options. The Chair encouraged the Chief Electoral Officer to meet with the Attorney General to discuss removing legislative constraints to allow a more cost-effective way of improving voters list quality prior to the next general election and providing a better long term approach to voter registration. The Attorney General requested that amendment recommendations be

developed for submission to the Fall 2003 and Spring 2004 sessions of the Legislature. The intent of the Fall 2003 legislative amendments is to remove the requirement that a general enumeration be conducted in the third calendar year following a general election (*Election Act*, section 42).

Report on Voters List Quality Audit:
Handouts of the presentation material, including maps and a copy of the survey letter, were provided to Committee members. Bob Williams presented details of the quality audit study results and advised that the Committee members will receive copies of the consolidated reports after Elections Canada has submitted their report inputs by the end of September. Elections Canada's priority has been on "fast track" boundary redistribution in preparation for the up-coming federal election.

The audit study measured the quality of the Elections BC and Elections Canada voters lists as at March 1, 2003. Statistics on currency and coverage were compiled using survey results and information from BC Stats and Elections Canada staff. As a primary update source, Elections Canada uses Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) data from over 80% of Canadians who mark the checkbox on their income tax form to allow information sharing. The audit study data provides opportunities for Elections BC to study additional criteria which will assist in targeting areas for enumeration.

In recent years, an increasing number of voters have been registering in conjunction with voting. Although this provides the opportunity for all eligible voters to vote, it impacts administration activities and campaign expense limits. Maintaining a current voters list is critical to effective electoral administration and minimizing administrative barriers to voter participation. The audit study recommendations include combining federal and provincial voters lists; developing improved registration maintenance programs; and giving special attention to under-covered groups such as aboriginal communities, youth, and the homeless.

Legislative Amendments to be Recommended:
A handout was provided to the Committee members. Linda Johnson presented the details on the Fall 2003 submission to amend the requirement that a general enumeration be conducted in the third calendar year following a general election. With the introduction of fixed election dates, enumeration a full year before an election is not an efficient use of resources. The proposed amendment removes the calendared date but retains the ability of the Chief Electoral Officer to conduct targeted enumerations. An overview of the amendment recommendations for the Spring 2004 session was also provided. The amendment package will recommend using the federal voters list as a source of new voters and updates, will address most of the recommendations in the Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the 37th Provincial General Election, and will introduce some new amendments. Linda Johnson stressed the importance of meeting the September 5th deadline for legislation requests. Therefore, a "placeholder" request for legislation will be submitted for the Spring 2004 session as there are significant policy issues to be resolved before a detailed package can be put in place.

Hector MacKay-Dunn described the discussion of legislative changes as an information session, not consultation. The members received an agenda before the meeting but did not get details to review. He stated his belief that for consultation as defined in section 16 of the *Election Act*, members should have had more information a week in advance of the meeting before going ahead. He indicated support for improved registration initiatives but stated that he did not know enough about the legislative changes to comment. Other members agreed and some suggested that all recommendations should be submitted for the Spring 2004 session, or that the Fall 2003 recommendations should be amended. The Chief Electoral Officer explained that Elections BC requires the Fall 2003 changes to minimize financial impacts of enumeration preparation.

Discussion centered on legislative change requirements, and the need for Committee members to have more information for providing intelligent feedback. The members suggested that the legislated requirement for an enumeration to be conducted in May of the third calendar year following a general election might be replaced with "within one year of the scheduled election period". Harry Neufeld advised that enumeration capability was still retained in the suggested amendments for the Fall 2003 session, and that there would be adequate time for intensive consultations before finalizing the Spring 2004 package.

Enumeration Alternatives:
Presentation handouts on the 2004 Enumeration Solution were distributed. Charlene Meehan presented an overview of the enumeration project team's planning work which included a review of previous enumeration methods; Elections BC's current situation including the impact of regional office closures and budget reductions; the opportunities being pursued to maintain an up-to-date voters list; and recommendations for conducting the next enumeration.

The proposed enumeration solution was described as a multi-channeled approach, using synchronized maintenance of Elections Canada and Elections BC voters lists data supplemented by a pre-election targeted registration campaign. To implement the solution, preparation must begin now to remove legislative barriers and to put a plan and policies in place to address all issues including privacy, restrictions to voters list use, and adequate opportunities for all eligible voters to register. Benefits would include lower costs compared to other enumeration alternatives, significant reduction in voting day registration, and an overall improvement in service delivery to the electorate. Beyond enumeration, the recommended approach optimizes on-going voter registration activity and continuous list maintenance.

Next Meeting:
The next meeting is tentatively scheduled to take place in early October 2003. An information package will be emailed to the members a minimum of one week prior to the meeting. If there is a delay in issuing the packages, the meeting will be re-scheduled to give adequate time for review.

Minutes of the Election Advisory Committee held October 16, 2003

Introductions and Administrative Matters:
Harry Neufeld, Chief Electoral Officer, called the meeting to order and welcomed the Committee members. Administrative matters in relation to the meeting facility and attendees' expenses were reviewed.

Agenda Items:
Harry Neufeld provided an overview of the agenda content and background from the Committee's September 2003 meeting. In preparation for this meeting, documents regarding proposed legislative amendments had been emailed to the members a week in advance.

Proposed Legislative Amendments – Fall 2003:
Linda Johnson described Elections BC's specific recommendations for legislative amendments for the Fall 2003 session. The intent of the amendments is to remove the requirement that a general enumeration be conducted in the third calendar year following a general election. The proposal retains the ability of the Chief Electoral Officer to conduct full or targeted enumerations as required. After the September 2003 Election Advisory Committee meeting, full consideration was given to the members' feedback before submitting the legislation request for the Fall session and establishing a "placeholder" request for new legislation at the Spring 2004 session. The legislation request conveyed the Election Advisory Committee members' preference to have an alternative enumeration schedule instead of removing the requirement. However, of the eight Canadian jurisdictions that currently have legislation enabling continuous or synchronized voters lists, B.C. is the only one that still requires enumeration. Calendared enumerations are inconsistent with continuous lists and fixed election dates.

Government is aware that the Fall submission is 'Part 1' of a two part package that will be finalized for the Spring 2004 session. Elections BC has committed to conducting a targeted enumeration before the next election to ensure that the list is complete and current. The recent voters list quality audit study recommended combining federal and provincial voters lists to provide the best coverage and currency. It was noted that federal legislation has eliminated the need for further enumerations.

Discussion focused on previous enumerations. The last province-wide door-to-door enumeration was conducted in 1989 and produced poor results: new registrations were low; confirmation of registered voters at their current address was approximately 60%; residents did not want to be disturbed; enumerators encountered safety issues; and, there was a low return rate on packages left at the door. The last mailout enumeration was in 1999 at a cost of more than $4 million, and once again results were disappointing with approximately 28,000 new registrations and confirmations at 60%. Enumeration alternatives have been analyzed and Elections BC has identified six options, including a targeted enumeration, hinging on legislation, that would enable a multi-channeled approach including mail, telephone and door-to-door. By first updating records with Elections Canada's voter register contents for British Columbia; and then identifying "empty" addresses where there are no voters registered, a focused

mail campaign can be undertaken. By using demographic data, registration activities could target youth and other under-covered groups such as aboriginal communities and the homeless, identifying those requiring door-to-door contact closer to the election.

With fixed election dates, moving the targeted enumeration activity closer to Writ day would reduce costs, improve service delivery to voters, and produce a better quality voters list. Members expressed concern that the budget for registration activity will be reduced if the requirement for a general enumeration is removed from the legislation. Linda Johnson advised that the *Election Act* costs are a statutory appropriation and separate from Elections BC's shrinking operational budget. Funding is based on identified costs, excluding administrative overhead and regular staff costs. The legislative package provides scaled cost estimates (e.g., no legislative changes, some legislation, etc.), and includes the potential cost of a full door-to-door enumeration at $15.4 million. Harry Neufeld assured members that, in the future, voters list quality audits will be done as a measurement to ensure that acceptable standards of coverage and currency are maintained. As electoral events arise, Harry Neufeld advises the Chair of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services with details and cost estimates, followed by a presentation to enable the members to make an informed decision.

Kelly Reichert wished that it be stated, for the record, that the BC Liberal Party believes it is important that a province-wide door-to-door enumeration be conducted prior to the 2005 general election, as a full door-to-door enumeration of voters has not been conducted since 1989. Members were generally in favour of a multi-channeled targeted enumeration and discussed the need to focus on youth and pre-registration in the schools; they requested details on targeting "empty" addresses, and agreed that some groups would require door-to-door contact. It was suggested that higher registration coverage could drop the voting turnout percentage and the Chief Electoral Officer indicated that the objective was to reverse the trend that saw only 55% of eligible voters participate in the 2001 election.

Proposed Legislative Amendments – Spring 2004:
Linda Johnson referenced the handout and commented on specific items in the three sections. It was noted that timing was critical; these amendments must be considered in the Spring 2004 legislative session to ensure adequate time for implementation prior to the 2005 general election. Ms. Johnson indicated she planned to brief the Attorney General following the Election Advisory Committee review of legislative recommendations.

The Voter Registration and Voters List Maintenance section was reviewed regarding requested amendments to resolve issues such as: restricting the voters list usage to enable the Chief Electoral Officer to use the federal file as a source of new voters and updates to existing voter registrations; establishing residency rules consistent with other jurisdictions to provide adequate flexibility for the homeless; and, removing the signature requirement at the time of registration to facilitate on-line registration and automatic registrations from Elections Canada. Voters will continue to sign a declaration of qualification at the time of voting and when completing petition sheets. Members questioned citizenship qualifications and the need to maintain a signature file for recalls

and initiatives. Linda Johnson advised that Elections Canada verifies the citizenship status of new registrants, and alternatives to petition signature verification will be addressed in the Chief Electoral Officer's Recall Report that will be tabled in the Fall session and subsequently released to the public.

The Recommendations from the Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on the 37th General Election had been previously reviewed by the Election Advisory Committee. Linda Johnson reviewed some recommended changes and elaboration for the Spring 2004 package which included amendments to other Acts to ensure tenants of rental properties and residents of strata properties are permitted to display campaign signs and creation of new sections rather than previously recommended amendments to sections 201 and 223. Members expressed concern that a previous recommendation to permit provisional registration of 16 year olds is not going forward. There was discussion regarding low youth participation and ways to encourage pre-registration in the schools. Harry Neufeld advised that to communicate effectively with young voters, past methods cannot be used, and there is not enough time to develop an effective program before the next election. Recommendations for provisional registration will be put forward in the future, however, the current youth registration focus needs to be placed on 18–24 year olds where only 21% of eligible voter population register. Linda Johnson informed members that Grade 11 education kits are being developed, registration cards are sent to the schools before each electoral event, and at the last election, District Electoral Officers were encouraged to hire 16–17 year olds as voting officials to make them part of the system. Elections BC will be attending Elections Canada's Fall 2003 Youth Participation conference in preparation for a national registration campaign.

The final section of additional amendment recommendations was reviewed as a component of the recommended Spring 2004 legislative package. The focus of these additions is ensuring consistency and providing flexibility in the use of resources. The Chief Electoral Officer requires limitations to be removed with regard to appointing District Registrars of Voters, caregivers in extended care facilities and group homes should be able to assist more than one voter to mark their ballots, and sufficient time must be allotted for the courts to establish the date, time, and place for a judicial recount. Minor amendments to the *Recall and Initiative Act* are also recommended to harmonize with the financing provisions in the *Election Act*.

The Committee members did not express any objections to the recommendations for legislative amendments for Spring 2004.

Policy Review on Voters List Data Content:
A handout listing the data fields for electronic and printed versions of the voters list was provided to the members. Harry Neufeld advised that the content and structure of electronic lists is being opened for a policy review. A request from one political party has been received to include a voter's most recent update or confirmation date, and additional requests will be considered. It is recognized that file format changes may affect the parties' existing list processing programs, and some additional data requests could violate privacy guidelines. The Chief Electoral Officer advised that no changes would be made without a thorough review and communication with the Election Advisory Committee.

Questions were answered concerning the types of confidential information that would not be available for inclusion on the voters list, and there was general interest expressed in having access to province-wide statistics by age group, voting area, etc. Requests from the Election Advisory Committee members for changes to electronic voters list content must be submitted to the Chief Electoral Officer in writing prior to December 31, 2003.

Information for Candidates:
Linda Johnson distributed handouts listing items currently in 'Nomination Kits' and 'Candidate Kits'. Neither of these kits contains finance forms, which are sent directly to the financial agents after the close of nominations, nor do they contain voters lists which are only available to certified candidates after the Writ is issued. To ensure the contents of these kits are providing value, a review is being undertaken to determine if the current materials are useful, what items should be added or changed, what information could be made available electronically, what needs to be printed, etc. Members agreed that printed maps are essential. While access to electronic forms and guides was agreed to be useful, any extra printing costs would negatively affect the available budget of candidates who are legally required to contain costs within set expense limits. It was also suggested that more detailed guidelines for the Statement of Disclosure form be provided by the office responsible for this form.

Ms. Johnson asked members to be ready to provide feedback on any required changes to the kit contents at the next Election Advisory Committee meeting.

Other Business:
Harry Neufeld provided the members with a draft version of the federal/provincial Voters List Quality Audit Report and advised that official copies would be distributed when publication formatting and printing is completed. The project was the first scientific study of voters list quality in Canada undertaken at this level of detail and the $150,000 external cost was shared equally with Elections Canada. Statistical tables printed in the report provided answers to some questions members had raised during the meeting.

Next Meeting:
The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, January 15, 2004. Information kit requirements for candidates will be on the agenda at that meeting, and requests for changes to electronic voters list data content will also be discussed at that time.

Note: Meeting tentatively scheduled for January 2004 rescheduled to April 2004.